SITREP.01.03

A SITUATION REPORT ON EMERGENCY TRANSBOUNDARY OUTBREAK PESTS (ETOPS) FOR JANUARY WITH A FORECAST TILL MID-MARCH, 2003

SUMMARY

1. Summary: This report provides an update about recent activities on emergency transboundary outbreak pests (ETOPs) in Africa, the Middle-East, Central and Southwest Asia, and Latin America. The report includes activities that took place in January and a forecast till mid-March, 2003. Key ETOPs, including locusts, grasshoppers, armyworm and grain-eating red-billed Quelea birds are covered by the report. A brief overview of the current status of each of these pests is outlined in the remainder of this summary with detailed accounts provided thereafter.

DESERT LOCUST, SCHISTOCERCA GREGARIA (FORSKAL)

2. Desert locusts, Schistocerca gregaria (Forskal). According to an FAO update, favorable conditions persisted in January in the winter breeding areas but, locust numbers remained low. Except for a few isolated adults sighted in northern Niger, southern Algeria, and an unconfirmed report of adults and hoppers from northern Mali, nearly all of the winter breeding areas in western and northwestern Africa remained calm. Significant developments are not expected during the forecast period in these regions.

3. Despite the favorable conditions that persisted in the Central Region areas, only a few isolated adults were reported in northwestern Somalia and the other countries in this region remained relatively calm. However, it is likely that small-scale breeding could occur along the coasts of Sudan, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia and Yemen. If conditions continue to be favorable, small-scale breeding could also occur in northwestern Somalia during the forecast period. The other countries in the region will likely remain calm during the forecast period.

4. Although conditions were improving in the spring breeding areas of eastern Iran and western Pakistan in the Eastern Region, locusts were not reported in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan or India in January. A few isolated locusts may be seen in the spring breeding areas during the forecast period but, significant developments are not likely.

OTHER LOCUSTS AND GRASSHOPPERS.

5. Red locusts, Nomadacris septem fasciata (Surville): The red locust situation remained relatively calm in the DLCO-EA member countries. No reports were received from the IRLCO-CSA region. However, small-scale activities might have been going on in the outbreak areas of Tanzania.

6. Madagascar migratory locust, Locusta migratoria capito (L.). No reports were received on the Malagasy migratory locusts in January. A few hoppers may have started appearing in the Horombe Plateau and the southwestern breeding areas. No major development is expected during the forecast period.

7. No reports were received on tree locusts, Anacridium melanorhodon (Walker), the African migratory locust, Locusta migratoria migratorioides (L.), brown locust, Locustana pardalina (Walker), Moroccan locust, Dociostaurus maroccanus (Thunberg), Italian locust, Calliptamus italicus (L), and the Senegalese grasshopper, Oedaleus senegalensis (Krauss). Small-scale activities of the variegated grasshopper, Zonocerus variegatus (L) were reported in Senegal.

8. No locust activities were reported from Central Asia and Latin America in January.

9. Armyworm, Spodoptera exempta (Walker). Armyworm outbreaks continued to occur in crop fields and pasture in a number of regions in Tanzania and Kenya. In Tanzania infestations were reported in more than 31,000 ha. High moth catches were reported in Central Tanzania and Arusha in late December and most of January. In Kenya, armyworm infestations were recorded on more than 5000 ha of grass fields. A late received report indicated that armyworm infestations were also sighted on maize, millet and grass fields in six districts in Kenya in December and controlled using Dursban ULV. Other DLCO-EA member countries remained free of armyworm in January. No reports were received on armyworm from the IRLCO-CSA member countries.

10. Red-billed quelea, Quelea quelea (L.). Quelea infestation was reported in Nakuru District, Kenya in January. A late received report indicated that Quelea infestations were reported in irrigated rice fields in Nyando and Kisumu Districts, Nyanza Province, Kenya. Control operations were hindered by continued flooding in affected areas. No quelea bird activities were reported from the other DLCO-EA member countries or the IRLCO-CSA counties in January. Quelea breeding and infestations are likely to continue during the forecast period in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe and perhaps, could cause some damage to crops. End of Summary.

ENVIRONMENTAL SITUATION: WEATHER AND ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

11. Light rains fell in western Morocco on the Atlantic coasts. Northern Algeria also received light showers and heavy rains fell in southern Tunisia. Scattered clouds developed and persisted in northern Mauritania and southern Morocco. Isolated showers were reported in southeastern Mauritania, northern Mali, and eastern Niger and where favorable conditions were reported in a few places. Other parts of Sahelian West Africa and northern Africa remained fairly dry.

12. Isolated light showers fell in a few places along the Red Sea coasts in Sudan, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia and Yemen in January. In Eritrea, 35 mm and 24 mm of rain were recorded in Ghinda (1522N/3910E) and Assab (1302 N/4245E), respectively. Cloud covers were seen over Egypt, the Chad/Libya/Sudan borders, over Sudan/Egypt border on the Red Sea coasts, and along the Yemen/Saudi Arabia border. However, conditions were unfavorable in the winter breeding areas north of Shalatein, Egypt. Light showers and moderate rains were reported in January in Djibouti and northwestern Somalia, respectively and vegetation was green in areas where the rains fell. A total of 20 mm of rain was recorded in Dire Dawa, eastern Ethiopia during the third dekad in January. Other countries in the region remained fairly dry during the month.

13. Isolated showers were reported at Jask, Iran and Jiwani and Pasni, Pakistan, along the coasts in the spring breeding areas of the Eastern Region. Light showers were also reported in Rajasthan, India where extremely low temperatures and unfavorable dry conditions persisted. No meteorological information was received from the other countries in the region. It is likely that conditions will continue to remain unfavorable during the forecast period.

14. Heavy rains fell in parts of northern Mozambique and northern Madagascar throughout January. While most parts of Kenya remained fairly dry, rain fell along the coasts and in the Lake Region in Tanzania. The high pressure that persisted over most of southern Africa, prevented precipitation from forming in January in most parts of Zimbabwe, northeastern Botswana, northeastern South Africa, and southern Mozambique. The total rainfall for the season continued to be much less than normal throughout the region and is expected to stay same with the exception of occasional light showers during the forecast period. least, with only local relief likely. Dry conditions also persisted in the other red locust outbreak areas.

DESERT LOCUST ACTIVITIES

15. Western and northwestern Africa. Surveys were not carried out and locusts were not reported in Mauritania in January. Unconfirmed populations of adult and hoppers were reported in a few places in Tilemsi Valley and Timetrine, Mali during the reporting month. Scattered first-fifth instar hoppers and immature adults were seen in mid to late December on the Talak Plains north of Agadez and a few wadis in the northern Aire Mountains. As vegetation continued to dry up, locusts were forced to concentrate in a few paths giving rise to small but, dense populations. A few individual immature and mature adults were reported in a few wadis (dry riverbeds) near Tamanressat, Algeria in January. Locusts were not reported from Chad, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and Guinea Conakry in January.

16. Forecast: Isolated adults may be found in a few places in northwest Mauritania and as the vegetation continues to dry up, locusts will concentrate in a few places in the Timetrine, Tilemsi Valley, and the Adrar des Iforas, Mali. With the onset of the warm southerly winds these locusts may begin moving north into southern Algeria. In Niger, locust numbers will continue to decline in Tamesna and Airas conditions continue to be unfavorable. Isolated adults will persist to mature and perhaps, breed on a small-scale should conditions improve during the forecast period. The situation will likely continue to be calm during the forecast period in other countries in these regions.

17. Eastern Africa, northeastern Africa, and the Near East Regions. Isolated immature adult locusts were seen in northwestern Somalia in January. Surveys that were carried out in Egypt, Sudan, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia and Yemen during the reporting month did not report any locusts. No locusts were reported from other countries in these regions in January.

18. Forecast: A few isolated adults could persist and may breed in a significantly small-scale in a few places along the Red Sea coastal plains of Sudan, Eritrea, Saudi Arabia and Yemen and along the northwestern coastal plains of Somalia. Other countries in these regions will continue to remain calm during

the forecast period.

19. Eastern region. No locusts were seen in Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India in January.

20. Forecast: Very few adult locusts may be seen in the coastal regions of Baluchistan, Pakistan. Significant locust developments are not expected in the Eastern region during the forecast period.

OTHER LOCUST AND GRASSHOPPER ACTIVITIES

21. Moroccan/Mediterranean locust, D. maroccanus (Thunberg) and the Italian locust, C. italicus (L): No reports were received on the Moroccan/Mediterranean or the Italian locust in Central Asian at the time this report was compiled.

22. Forecast: No locust activities are expected during the forecast period. Eggs that were laid by the Moroccan locust in parts of Afghanistan and other countries in the region will still remain inactive until this coming Spring.

23. Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC). No reports were received on locusts or grasshoppers in LAC countries in December.

24. Forecast. No significant developments are expected during the forecast period.

25. Red locust, N. septem fasciata (Surville). Red locusts were not reported from the DLCO-EA countries and no reports were received from the IRLCO-CSA region. However, limited activities might have been going on in the outbreak areas of Tanzania. Some residual locusts that persisted in the outbreak areas might have resulted in small-scale breeding in Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia, and Mozambique, however, significant populations did not develop during the reporting month.

26. Forecast: Locust populations may slightly increase in areas where small-scale breeding took place during the month, especially in Tanzania. Vigilant surveillance and monitoring are required.

Note: Southern African will likely trigger serious ETOP outbreaks and could affect the traditional red locust, quelea as well as armyworm outbreak regions in this region. Post-drought outbreaks of brown locusts may also become more evident in southern Botswana, southern Namibia and South Africa. It is imperative that regular survey and monitoring activities are carried out to avert any massive invasions that could occur once the drought spell is broken. This phenomenon is applicable to all ETOPs.

27. Madagascar migratory locust, L. migratoria capito (L.). No reports were received on the Malagasy migratory locusts in January. A few hoppers may have started appearing in the Horombe Plateau and the southwestern breeding areas. No major development is expected during the forecast period.

28. Brown locust, L. pardalina (Walker): No reports were received on brown locust, L. pardalina (Walker) in January. Due to the prevailing drought, significant locust activities are not expected during the forecast period.

ARMYWORM ACTIVITIES

29. Armyworm, S. exempta (Walker). Armyworm outbreaks continued to occur in

crop fields and pasture in a number of regions in Tanzania and Kenya. In Tanzania infestations were reported in Dododma, Morogoro, Iringa, Kilimanjaro, Tanga, Manyara, Mtwara and Tabora regions. The pest was recorded on more than 31,000 ha, in some 200 villages, in 21 districts. High moth catches were also reported in Central Tanzania and Arusha in late December and in most of January. In Kenya, armyworm infestations were recorded on more than 5000 ha, mainly on grass fields. A late received report also indicated that armyworm infestations were sighted on maize, millet and grass fields in six districts in Kenya in December where control operations were effected using Dursban ULV.

30. Forecast: It is likely that some armyworm infestations will continue to occur in Tanzania and Kenya and perhaps start moving into neighboring countries including Uganda and Ethiopia. Infestations could also occur in Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe, if rain fall during the forecast period.

QUELEA BIRD ACTIVITIES

31. Red-billed quelea, Q. quelea (L). Quelea infestation was reported in Nakuru District, Kenya in January. Quelea infestations were reported in irrigated rice fields in Nyando and Kisumu Districts, Nyanza Province, Kenya where control operations were hindered by continued flooding in affected areas. No information was received from southern Africa at the time this report was compiled.

32. Forecast: Quelea breeding and infestations are likely to continue in Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zimbabwe and could cause some damage to crops during the forecast period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

33. Most of the current locust and other migratory pest populations generally did not require significant control actions. However, if they are left unaddressed, these pests could increase in numbers to a level that could pose serious threats to crops and pasture. It is important that regular monitoring, surveillance and reporting are maintained and that the results communicated promptly to the appropriate bodies within the national, regional and international structures.

ACTION REQUESTED AND CONTACT INFORMATION

34. The Africa Emergency Locust/ Grasshopper Assistance (AELGA) project, previously managed by the US Agency for International Development's (USAID), Bureau for Africa (AFR), has been transferred to the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance (DCHA), and is being managed by the Office for US Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). AELGA works closely with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, Agriculture Production and Protection Division, Plant Protection Services (UN/FAO/AGPP/PPPD/MPU), DLCO-EA, IRLOC/CSA, USAID bilateral and regional missions, host country ministries, and research establishments. Information on ETOPs is regularly collected from these and other entities, including the Information Core for Southern Africa Migratory Pests (ICOSAMP) to continuously monitor and analyze the potential risks for large-scale emergency outbreaks, and compile and disseminate as AELGA's SITREPS to all interested parties. Unsolicited reports or information about ETOP situations and activities in your region or country are always welcome and much appreciated.

35. Missions with programs on food security, emergency pests and other related activities, host countries and regional organizations with similar portfolios, and other stakeholders are kindly requested to forward their reports by the last day of the reporting month or within the first three days of the following month. Please, forward reports, information, questions, and/or requests to Dr. Yeneneh T. Belayneh: ybelayneh@ofda.net FAX: 202-347-0315 (USA). Please, cc your response to Drs. Joe Vorgetts, jvorgetts@usaid.gov and Harry Bottenberg, hbottenberg@afr-sd.org

For more information on the weather conditions, you may visit the following web sites:
http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/faoinfo/economic/giews/economic/englslish/esahel/sehtoc.htm
http://www.fews.net

For more information on ETOPs activities, you may visit:

http://www.fao.org/news/global/locusts/locuhome.htm

http://www.english/newsroom/news/2002/5000-en.htm/

http://icosamp.ecoport.org/

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT AELGA'S ACTIVITIES, VISIT US AT OUR WEB SITE: WWW.AELGA.NET

UPCOMING EVENTS

Interregional Trainer Training Course on Alternative Application Strategies and Tactics (AAST) for acridid control, in 2003. Those interested can contact Dr. Yeneneh T. Belayneh, via e-mail: ybelayneh@ofda.net sd.org or phone/fax: 202-661-9374/202-347-0315 (USA)

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